Preliminary Amendment of U.S. National Stage for International Application PCT/EP2004/008089 filed July 20, 2004

At page 17, at line 1 thereof, please delete the section heading "CLAIMS" and insert the following new section heading:

WE CLAIM

Enter a new page 20 submitted herewith, containing an Abstract of the Disclosure.

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In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1-11 without prejudice, and add new claims 12-30, in accordance with the following complete listing of all claims ever presented. This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in the instant application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-11 (Canceled)

12. (New) A drilling fluid comprising an ether carboxylic acid of formula:

$$RO(CH_2CH_2O)_x(CH_2CHR^1O)_yCH_2\text{-}COOX \qquad (I)$$

wherein, R is a saturated or unsaturated, branched or unbranched alkyl or alkenyl group containing 6 to 22 carbon atoms, x is a number from 1 to 20 and y is 0 or a number from 1 to 20, provided that the sum of x and y is at least 1 and at most 25, R^1 is an alkyl group containing 1 to 4 carbon atoms and X comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of a hydrogen atom, monovalent anions and polyvalent anions.

13. (New) The drilling fluid of claim 12, which contains at least one aqueous phase and one oil phase, wherein, the emulsifier comprises the ether carboxylic acid of formula (I) .

14. (New) The drilling fluid of claim 12, wherein, an emulsifier in the drilling fluid which forms a water-in-oil or oil-in-water emulsion comprises the ether carboxylic acid of formula (I).

15. (New) The drilling fluid of claim 12 comprising: a water-based emulsion drilling fluid system which contains at least one ester of saturated or unsaturated, branched or

unbranched monocarboxylic acids containing 1 to 24 carbon atoms with monohydric, linear or branched, saturated or unsaturated alcohols containing 1 to 24 carbon atoms in an oil phase.

16. (New) The drilling fluid of claim 12, comprising a drilling fluid system which contains at least one member selected from the group consisting of linear α-olefins, internal olefins and paraffins in the oil phase.

17. (New) The drilling fluid of claim 12, wherein, the ether carboxylic acid of formula (I), comprises an ether carboxylic acid in which y is 0.

18. (New) The drilling fluid of claim 12, wherein, the ether carboxylic acids of formula (I), comprises an ether carboxylic acid in which x is a number from 1 to 15.

19. (New) The drilling fluid of claim 12, wherein, the ether carboxylic acid is present in quantities of 0.1 to 25% by weight, based on the weight of the drilling fluid.

20. (New) The drilling fluid of claim 12, wherein, the drilling fluid additionally comprises free fatty acids.

21. (New) A well servicing composition flowable and pumpable at 5° to 20°C comprising a continuous oil phase in admixture with a quantity of a disperse aqueous phase (w/o invert type) which optionally contains at least one dissolved and/or dispersed auxiliary selected from the group consisting of thickeners, fluid loss additives, wetting agents, fine-particle weighting agents, salts, alkali reserves and biocides, wherein, the composition contains a compound of formula:

$$RO(CH_2CH_2O)_x(CH_2CHR^1O)_yCH_2\text{-}COOX \qquad (I)$$

wherein, R is a saturated or unsaturated, branched or unbranched alkyl or alkenyl group containing 6 to 22 carbon atoms, x is a number from 1 to 20 and y is 0 or a number

from 1 to 20, provided that the sum of x and y is at least 1 and at most 25, R^1 is an alkyl group containing 1 to 4 carbon atoms and X comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of a hydrogen atom, monovalent anions and polyvalent anions.

22. (New) A well servicing composition as claimed in claim 21, wherein the oil phase comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of

(a) carboxylic acid esters of formula:

R'-COO-R" (II)

where R' is a saturated or unsaturated, linear or branched alkyl group containing 5 to 23 carbon atoms and R" is an alkyl group containing 1 to 22 carbon atoms, which may be saturated or unsaturated, linear or branched,

(b) linear or branched olefins containing 8 to 30 carbon atoms,

(c) water-insoluble, symmetrical or nonsymmetrical ethers of monohydric alcohols of natural or synthetic origin which contain 1 to 24 carbon atoms,

(d) water-insoluble alcohols of formula:

R'"-OH (III)

where R'" is a saturated, unsaturated, linear or branched alkyl group containing 8 to 24 carbon atoms,

(e) carbonic acid diesters,

(f) paraffins, and

g) acetals.

23. (New) The drilling fluid of claim 18, wherein, the ether carboxylic acid of formula (I) comprises an ether carboxylic acid wherein X is a number of from 1 to 10.

24. (New) The drilling fluid of claim 18, wherein, the ether carboxylic acid of formula

(I) comprises an ether carboxylic acid wherein X is a number of from 1 to 8.

25. (New) The drilling fluid of claim 19, wherein, the ether carboxylic acids is present in a quantity of from 0.1 to 10% by weight.

26. (New) The drilling fluid of claim 19, wherein the ether carboxylic acid is present in a quantity of from 0.1 to 5% by weight.

27. (New) The drilling fluid of claim 18, wherein, y is 0.

28. (New) The drilling fluid of claim 14 containing from 1% to 15% by weight of the ether carboxylic acid based on the weight of the oil phase.

29. (New) The drilling fluid of claim 12, wherein, the ether carboxylic acid comprises an ether carboxylic acid present as a salt.

30. (New) The drilling fluid of claim 12 comprising a liquid phase containing from 10% to 30% water and from 70% to 90% oil based on the liquid phase as a whole.